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Interviewee: Mike Wunderlin

Interviewer: Larry and Priscilla Massie

Attendees: Larry and Priscilla Massie, Mike Wunderlin

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Larry I wonder if you could tell me something about your early life and how you got interested in some of these things that you're interested in.

Mike I was raised Catholic, and I was very much into it. I was an altar boy. I believed very strongly in all that. Then as I got older, probably in my late 20's, early 30's, I went through changes, and all of a sudden I started questioning. I had a lot of questions. Such as, "Why is life the way it is?" And, "Why does God allow this and that?" I remember going to Father Fitzgerald, who lives in Kalamazoo. He's retired. He lives over where the big houses are, on whatever street behind West Michigan.

Larry He was a Catholic priest then?

Mike Yes, he's retired, Father Fitzgerald. He said, and I can always remember and I told him about it here a while back, he said, "Oh, you don't have to worry about all that stuff." For me, it was really important. In Astrology it's called a Saturn return and a lot of people in their early

Larry The wondering, you mean?

Mike Well, yes. They're questioning, and all of a sudden they're searching. It's a change that comes over you. It hit me when I was probably 33 or so. I had nobody, and I was reading everything I could get my hands on.

Larry It was your spiritual search.

Mike Yes, and I ended up meeting a fellow who came from India. His name was Raushan Nath, and he was a yogi.

Larry I know about him.

Mike So you know about—

Larry I know about him, but I want to hear your story, because I talked to Ruth a couple days ago.

Mike I had gotten involved in a group called Coptics. We had a store, a party store in Kalamazoo, and he came in the store and we got talking. He said, "There's this group, and they're having these meetings in Kalamazoo, reincarnation and all that stuff." I went, and I met these guys who became pretty much friends for life. There were three of them: Jerry Stifler was one, a guy named John Davis, and Joe Wessles, who's passed now. I got involved with that group through this guy saying there was this meeting at this place.

Through Joe Wessles, a guy that worked with him back then, an Indian guy, brought this guy from India. It was in his basement, probably in '71 or so. I walked in the door, and he was sitting on the floor; he looked at me and we went like this [a gesture?], so I was always sniffing that. Ruth always makes a joke, I had a nose for gurus.

I did because I wanted to, I was searching so hard. We sat next to him and he became kind of a mentor. Not really a teacher in a sense like Ruth was a disciple, not like that. But, without getting too esoteric, in a past life we were brothers and so we had a commonality. He recognized that, but I didn't, and so we would write. I would go to the meetings, even though I was still involved with this other one.

Larry The Coptic which is a Christian—

Mike Coptic Christian is Ethiopian Christian, but this was more of an esoteric, metaphysical group that came from a guy from Egypt, named Hamed Bayes. There was a guy in Detroit, a Coptic guy, his name was Kurt Stanley. He was a healer. He was an older fellow. He was originally from Switzerland. We'd go to those meetings every Tuesday night or Thursday in Detroit. We'd drive over there. There'd be three or four or five of us, and we'd go to the meeting.

He was also quite intuitive, but he was interested in spiritual growth. We would do that all the time. I had two things going on, and that satisfied me; but it got to a point where I still was searching. Another teacher became involved, and he was from India. I met him, maybe through Ruth; it could have been. His name was Taiga Ji.

Larry By this time, we're into the later 70's then, right? Because I think Ruth said she got into it in '75.

Mike No, we're actually in about '74.

Larry Really?

Mike 1974 was when he came; I know, because the following year I got into what I'm still into (Ed. Note: Sant Mat). Taiga Ji had a certain power, and we would go do these meditations and it got a little involved. I would have a dream, and then I'd wake up and I'd be in another dream, and I'd wake up and I'd be in another dream and then I'd wake up and be here. I was in different modes of consciousness.

Larry You remember them, too?

Mike Oh yes. I didn't quite understand it, but I was enjoying the experiential part of it. I had questions about it. I wasn't judging. It was just that there were some things that really bothered me. One was money. He accepted money, and I've always had this thing that—

Larry And solicited it, too?

Mike Yes, but it was done in such a way that it we didn't have to do it. It was service /seva, but it still bothered me. So I would work; we had a little health food store that Jerry and I started in 1971, over there at the Maple Hill Mall.

Larry And Jerry is?

Mike Stifler.

Larry Okay.

Mike Then Jerry got out of the store in '75. But in '74 I had a party store in Vicksburg, so we had both stores. I would work one night a week, on a Wednesday night, in the health food store; I would take that money I made and give it to this guy. It's just that the concept didn't sit with me. I was going through just terrible searching, and I prayed. I didn't pray, but I talked to God, and I said, "I really need help." I really was at my wit's end and didn't know what to do. I'd leave at five in the morning and go to this meditation. At that time I had two little kids, and I just didn't know.

That following Wednesday in the health food store, a guy came in and he came up with a candy bar and said, "Does this have eggs in it or any meat product?" I said, "No, it doesn't. Why?" He said, "I'm a vegetarian." I said, "I'm a vegetarian but I eat eggs." He said, "Well, we can't." He was a morning disk jockey on WMUK, played classical music, and he was into this Indian philosophy. It also was liberation.

Larry It's wasn't Gerard, was it?

Mike No, but I know Gerard and, in fact, he worked with Gerard.

Larry He did?

Mike Yes, Gerard was our neighbor. This guy, we went and had coffee, and I was mesmerized. I said, "Gawd, this is it, because it involved the liberation thing, which really sat well with me from this other guy. I was very open. It turned out he's the only guy in this whole part of Michigan, southern Michigan, that was involved with this teaching. I took two books home and I read them in two days, and one was a big book. And that was it.

Larry What was the brunt of that teaching?

Mike That teaching involves the Holy Spirit. It involves sound and light. It involves having a perfect teacher living. And you take vows of no meat, fish, eggs. No alcohol or drugs. No sex outside of marriage. A moral life. You don't screw anybody out of a nickel. You have to meditate two and a half hours a day, and you do a practice that is Holy Spirit oriented. So that was it.

Larry Was there a certain name for that?

Mike It's called Radhasoami or Sant Mat.

Larry I've heard of that.

Mike The Path of the Saints.

Larry Do you know Tom Beaver?

Mike I know Tom well.

Larry I think he's—

Mike He is. Tom is. In fact, that's how I met Tom. Tom met John through me. Actually, Mike Gergley and I were friends.

Larry And you arranged for Tom to be working—

Mike Tom lived up in Grand Haven, and he'd come down to our meetings at my house with the Radhasoami group. I remember when he first came. He ended up working for John.

Larry He's working with me on this project.

Mike Oh, is he?

Larry As a matter of fact, he'll be here this weekend.

Mike Really?

Larry He's doing something in Los Angeles.

Mike I hope he calls because, of course, Tom is pretty focused on what he's doing. If you don't have something going on, you're not going to hear from him.

Larry As a matter of fact, this weekend we're going to go out to the pyramid. Do you know the Hardys out at Dumont Lake?

Mike I've heard of them.

Larry They're having a big conference. We're going to go out there and check that out.

Larry Dumont Lake is in Allegan County.

Mike Oh, yes. That's interesting.

Larry It's at Sakkara. It's at some kind of a Sakkara.

Mike I've heard of that. God, you must be getting exposed to so much different stuff.

Larry Yes, it's really fascinating.

Mike Tom's still in it, because I'll see him in India. We go to India every year and we go in October. I haven't seen Tom now since he split up. It is what it is, and it's okay. What happened was Tom—how did that happen? Tom was coming to our meetings. I'm still involved in that. That was '75. It's been 36 years.

Moving up four years, I was still involved in Coptics, but I went to India for the first time in 1979. I asked the master about my doing this other stuff, and he said, "You have one teacher." I said, "But I still do these other lectures." He said, "You have one man, one teacher." I understand now, but I didn't so much then. I said, "Okay, I get it." When I got home, about that spring, we went to a Coptic thing; John Davis was there and we had a meeting in his room. There were about five or six of us, and Jim Gordon was there.

Larry Okay, was this in Pokagon?

Mike Yes. We were at this meeting, and we were talking about different stuff; Jim would interrupt, not interrupt, but he would say something. I said, "Where the hell is he getting all this stuff? I finally said to John, "John," I said, "Where does he get all this information?" He said, "Well, he's intuitive." I said, "Oh, I didn't know that," because as much of all the searching that I did, I never was into the glamour of the phenomena. I was into the chase, the spiritual.

After the meeting, I said to Jim, "I heard you do past lives." He said, "I do." I said, "Do you think you could do one for me, a reading?" He said, "Yes." Then he said, "When?" I said, "Well anytime." He said, "Well we could do it right now. We've got a break." So we went to his room. Do you want to hear this stuff?

Larry I went and interviewed him in Austin.

Mike Okay, so we went to his room. In what I'm into, what happens when you're initiated, since we look at the master as a perfect being, like Jesus was the Word made flesh, the Word being Holy Spirit. So he was God in human form, the Word made flesh. When you're initiated by the perfect master, everybody has guides, five to seven guides. They all lead. The master creates out of his own essence, which is Holy Spirit, Shabd it's called in India, his own essence. An inner light form of himself, called the inner master; when that happens, he takes charge of all your karmas. Do you understand the idea that we all have karmic debt?

Larry Yes.

Mike The whole idea is that we've been here since the beginning, trapped here, and life after life after life, for all sorts of existence all the way through vegetation, animal, human, and then back down and up again. We have no concept of how long we've been here.

Larry Not just humans. Sometimes you go to a lower form?

Mike You start it in human, and our belief system says that in creation, all the species were created at once, but then evolution kicked in so they're both correct, interestingly enough. The master creates an astral causal image, two forms of himself in the next two levels, and from then on he's in charge of your karmas. The whole purpose of a perfect master is to take you out of this, so you don't have to be reborn again. That's what liberation is.

Now there are lower forms of liberation with certain teachers. There is a particular amount of years (in the tens of millions) that you can be liberated, but then eventually that wears out, because that teacher was from a lower level. So that could be God realization at a lower level. What we were looking for, what I was aspiring for, was not to come back.

Larry So you would go to a higher plane? Is that the same as a level?

Mike Correct. You have the physical, and then you have astral, and then you have causal. Actually it's this way: This is physical, astral, causal and then this is universal mind. This is the home of the ruler of these lower three worlds. We call him the negative power, not because he's negative, but on an egg shape, this is the creator and this is where we're at. It was positive, negative, but in religious terms, he would be Jehovah. He would be Brahman.

Larry Or Yahweh.

Mike Yes, which is an eye for an eye, cause and effect, duality. Everything here is dual. Hot, cold, male, female. This ruler rules his whole creation which he created, but he didn't create soul. The creator gave him the souls to populate these three levels. Going around, it's the Wheel of Chaurasi they call it, the Wheel of 84. There are 8,400,000 species. It doesn't mean you've been in every one, but you've been in a lot of them.

So you reach a point where the Lord picks a certain amount, for whatever reason, and you're marked. Jesus said, "I come for my marked sheep." You're drawn to a perfect master, like Jesus would be considered a perfect master and he came for his marked sheep. But once he dies and goes and merges back into the creator, then they don't help us because they're not here. It's almost like when you're initiated, you learn certain things. There are certain words that we use for a mantra; our meditation is taught. All this happens on a physical level. The guides all leave and then we have this inner master. I went to Jim, and we sat down and I said, "What do you see?" And he said, "I don't understand. You don't have any guides." I said, "I understand that. What else do you see?" He said, "I see a line going up from the top of your head, and I see five Indians in a row," which are the five names that we use.

Larry That should not be spoken?

Mike Right, we use internally. In fact, Jim and Brian both now initiate; what level they are I don't know, and I don't judge and I don't care. My daughter and my son-in-law are disciples of Jim, and I don't care. All I know is, I'm into mine. Then he came into some other stuff about the philosophy, but then he went into past life stuff. That's how we met. I was going to India that fall, and I got lost about why I was. Somehow Jim started coming, he would come and stay with us.

Larry In Vicksburg.

Mike In Vicksburg. When he had something going on up here with Coptics, he'd stay at our house. Eventually I left, and I said I wasn't there anymore. I was into this other thing. Of course, Tom I met through Satsang. He would come to our meetings, and then Tom I introduced to Jim. Jim and our family were good friends, and we still are. Mike Gergley was my attorney, and I would go to Gergley, and Gergley is a soul that is kind of in between. He's still very involved in the Catholic church, but he's aspiring for more; he's very locked into the church, but he still had all these questions. Past lives fascinated him; he had some French stuff especially, and we were all involved in that life, Jim and Mike and I.

So I said, "I've got this friend that does past lives, and he also goes out of body at will. By the way, I left one little part about, very important part, about the

philosophy. We do this meditation. Eventually, it's a process of being aware of sound and light; and eventually you're pulled out of the body.

Larry Astral projection.

Mike Yes, and you go to the top of astral, and you meet the radiant form of the master. He then takes you by the hand; and then there was a philosophy called Eckankar. Do you know that?

Larry Yes.

Mike Eckankar was taken pretty much from what we're into. Paul Twitchell was a disciple of one of the masters. Back to Mike. I said, "You know, I've got this friend that does this." He said, "Look, if he's ever in town call me." A few months later Jim was staying with us, and I was going to take him to the Rotary in Vicksburg. I was in Rotary. Jim was going to go with me, and so I called Mike. I said, "My friend's in town. He's staying with us." Mike said, "Come on over." I said, "Well, we're going to the Rotary at noon. We'll be done about 1:30." He said, "Come over then." So we went over to his office.

Larry Same place there in Schoolcraft?

Mike He started asking questions and, God, he was just one after another. A lot to do with past lives and his own past lives. Then he said, "Well, I'm involved with an older gentleman. He has this foundation that I'm involved with, and it has to do with spiritual stuff. Jim said, "Oh, you're the one that I brought the stuff for," and he went in the other room and got his briefcase; he came out and brought –

Larry Like a file folder?

Mike No, it was a paper that had what the foundation would look like, not the building, but the name and what it entailed.

Larry It was one sheet?

Mike Yes, and he'll tell you about it. Jim will tell you about it, because I'll probably get it screwed up.

Larry No, I have the idea that it was a parcel of material, but then there was an illustration.

Mike That's what I had remembered, an illustration, but it was probably a parcel. Right away Mike said, "Well, I'm going to get a meeting with John." Some of this gets a little far out.

Larry Do you remember Mike Gergley saying to Jim, "How do you know all this stuff?"

Mike Of course he would, but Jim had contact. They were able to speak to him, and then he would give information. Jim would come to the (Coptic) meetings, and the following year he came again, and we went to Pokagon again. I remember there was going to be a channeling; Jim normally never channeled, and I never heard him of channeling since, but he did that time.

Larry You mean public channeling?

Mike Yes, well he did it with John, too. He did it probably maybe more. I don't know.

Larry He did it for a number of years, yes.

Mike But the one time he did do it was when we went to John's office. They turned the lights down, and a couple entities came through; I always remember there was a doctor. She lived across the street from Mike.

Larry Zolen.

Mike Yes, Margaret. Her husband Frank, they had married later, and Mike and I used to laugh about it. Here Jim was doing all this stuff, and voices were talking and lights were dim; Frank was snoring, and we always laugh now. We think this was pretty critical stuff, and Frank was snoring.

Larry When he channeled, would there be different voices coming out of him?

Mike At that time, yes.

Larry I mean, sounding different.

Mike Yes.

Larry Okay.

Mike Yes, this stuff is so far out for most people, but there was an entity called St. Julian. I don't know if you've ever heard that term; he came through and one other time he came through. We had a meeting in Pokagon before we met John, and he had come through at that time. I still was into my own master but, of course, I was involved with the group. I thought it was rather fascinating because I'd never been in anything like this.

Larry Why did you guys go to Pokagon?

Mike We would have a yearly—

Larry But was there a reason for Pokagon?

Mike No, just the reason was that all the teachers from all over the country would come together and they would have lectures. It would be a two-day thing.

Larry What facility was down there?

Mike There was like a big motel.

Larry Because, Pokagon, the Indian was down there. It's named after him.

Mike Yes, yes.

Larry (inaudible) some assignment.

Mike Oh, I didn't know that. I knew the name. Jim had done that there, and I always remember the voice said, "I'm now going to go." He was called the Keeper of the Violet, whatever it is. It's just this brotherhood, but it's lower world stuff. It's lower three worlds, and they have a role to play in trying to keep harmony, and keep this whole thing intact. It's a lot more structured than people have any idea of. A lot of people don't believe there's anything. It's the opposite from that. There's so much. So, what happened was, I'm just sitting with my eyes closed, and suddenly it exploded violet in my forehead.

Larry Was there a sound, too?

Mike No, just the light, and that happened to everybody; that gave it a little validity. I thought, "Well, this is kind of interesting," even though I pretty much stayed away from the phenomena, because of what I'm into, you don't get anywhere. That's not part of our deal. Our deal is getting out of here and not trying to figure out what we're going to do here, and how we're going to save the world.

It's like an evolutionary process. The way we look at it in Sant Mat is that, in the human form, first there's the tremendous ego. In the hedonistic, a person is only involved in themselves, and that's all what they want. Then you kind of evolve into where you want to save the world, you want to do stuff for everybody, and you want to make it a better world. Finally, that changes, and you evolve into where you want to get off. This is not heaven and most people have no recognition that they've been here before. We don't remember last month, let alone a past life.

Larry What movie I watched last night.

Mike Same thing. Once you are open enough, your consciousness opens enough where you're faced with different belief systems; you start to accept them. Then when you do meditation, you start to experience them, and they become a reality. So, anyway, so we went to John's office.

Larry Before we get to that part, John was taken with this illustration [brought by Jim Gordon], which doesn't look like much. We've wondered why, and recently we realized that John Fetzer had been dreaming of this, and it was Archangel Michael.

Mike Right, because that's one of the ones that came through.

Larry Right.

Mike I knew John was taken with it. Jim became a confidant of John, and it caused a certain amount of disruption in John's circle, because a lot of people felt that Jim was just stepping in with an old guy with money.

Larry Was Ken Killick still there at this time?

Mike I don't remember him.

Larry He was a psychic before John.

Mike See, I didn't know that.

Larry Before Jim, I mean.

Mike That I didn't know. I never knew there was another one, to be honest.

Larry He made some mistakes and told John some wrong things.

Mike Jim has always been quite accurate. What Jim will say is, "Some things are set in stone," and he'll tell you, "But then other things are subject to change according to what happens in the meantime." It's like you're watching a train and they're coming together; and you're here and you hear the sirens. You start to see them when they get this close, and they're going to crash; when you're able to go higher, you see more cause and effect but, on the other hand, unless it's set in stone there still could be change. What happened? John became very close to—

Larry You were going to tell me about in his office. You were there with Jim Gordon and John.

Mike And Mike Gergley and Frank were there.

Larry This was one of the first meetings?

Mike It was the first, the first with John, and I had never met John. That was my first time I met John. Not that John and I were ever close, but I respected him. He

respected me. He was always very kind, and we'd go out to eat. When Jim would come in town, we'd all go out to eat a few times.

Larry Chicken Charlies? Is that where you went?

Mike I remember Chicken Charlies. He loved Chicken Charlies, but actually we'd go to —what was that restaurant in Southland Mall? Chardonnay, we'd go there. They had a good salad bar and that's where we'd go; that wasn't a lot, but it was a few times.

Larry Was this the Monday night group that would go there, and you went along?

Mike No, no, this would be Tom and Jim Gordon and John and I, and my wife and our daughter.

Larry Tom came, I think, in '85.

Mike Tom met Jim at our house, and they became [??]. It's hard to see, Larry. It's like our master, the present master, says, "You can't judge anybody, because you really don't see the big picture." We don't see past lives, where Jim has an advantage sometimes. It's not always an advantage to have his talents, because it creates a lot of disruption. But he had the ability to see past lives very well; he could see how you were connected, what life you were connected. It wasn't an accident that he ended up with John, because they had been together in past lives, and Tom also. Through Jim, Tom got the job of running John's house; we had a couple of other people I know who were cooks there. One was a lady in our philosophy, and there were different ones. But there was kind of a metaphysical string that goes around Kalamazoo. Everybody pretty much knew everybody. I remember that.

I wasn't privy to what went on when the Foundation got going. I did know Lloyd peripherally, but then that didn't work out. He built the building, and then Glenn Olds; so you had different perspectives each time. It was kind of different, and he brought up a guy from Texas, to make that thing they had.

Larry The Hologram. Vincent.

Mike It turns out he was also in the same group as me, but I didn't know him and that isn't how he came. It just happened that he was a disciple in the same group we were, and I did meet him. I remember that. They came to our house.

Larry He had a rapport with John through Atlantis.

Mike Could be.

Larry That's what he told me.

Mike John was supposedly not only a pharaoh, but he was also a king in Atlantis, according to Jim, and I just didn't question. I didn't care. I thought it was fine, but it didn't make any difference whether it was true or not. I took for granted it was so, but I tended to be more open. Whereas I know some of the people weren't quite as open to what Jim was saying, and that caused a certain amount of infighting, and I'm talking about strictly from what I heard.

Larry Sure.

Mike Back then, you know. Then they moved to Hawaii, which I thought was wonderful for John personally.

Larry He wanted it.

Mike He did, and he enjoyed it. John drove that old Cadillac for years, and I guess I could say he was close with a buck.

Larry He was.

Mike But he was very generous, too.

Larry I think my theory about him being close with a buck was because he wanted to do something big with the money.

Mike And he did. He accumulated quite a bit of capital. I'd be in touch with Jim, even though Jim was by then out of the Coptics. Jim was hired, and John funded him, you know that. Over the years after John passed, there was a lot of—not a lot. I don't know, I'm just telling you what my perception was, that there was a certain amount of in-scraping over that.

Finally they got together and parted, and he was funded; I never had a problem with it. I didn't even think of it in terms of Jim earned it. That wasn't how I looked at it. I just looked at it as, that's how it was supposed to be. My belief system allows me to believe that everything's set up, that there aren't any accidents.

Larry Pre-ordained.

Mike Everything's pre-ordained, so we basically go through the steps a lot. We have some choices whether we want to go to downtown Kalamazoo, or I'll use the example Portage. Do we want to take the highway, or do we want to take Drake Road, or do we want to go Westnedge? We have a choice, but we end up in Portage.